

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND DON KNABE

September 20, 2016

Effective January 1, 2017, California's Continuum Care Reform (CCR, also known as AB 403) calls for a comprehensive approach to improving the experience and outcomes for children and youth in foster care. The main goals of CCR are to further improve California's child welfare system and its outcomes by reducing use of congregate care placement settings; increasing use of home-based family care; and decreasing the length of time to achieve permanency. This will be accomplished through a variety of efforts such as using comprehensive initial child assessments, expanding the use of Child and Family Teams, and increasing the availability of services and supports in home-based family care settings.

The Institute for Child Outcomes (dba Kids Insight), a non-profit organization created with the support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Duke Endowment and Outcome Referrals, helps child welfare systems measure children's social and emotional well-being using a patented, automated behavioral assessment process called the Treatment Outcome Package (TOP). TOP data incorporates input from multiple individuals in the child's life; tracks child well-being over time; and supports

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accountability by evaluating those strategies that produce the best results. TOP has been implemented in multiple child welfare jurisdictions across the nation, contributing to successful system reform.

To support successful CCR implementation, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) entered into a contract with Kids Insight to pilot the TOP tool in San Diego, Fresno, Tuolumne and Los Angeles counties. One of the primary reasons for piloting rather than adapting statewide use of the TOP tool is to allow counties to fully evaluate results and to provide input to CDSS. The State's contract with Kids Insight allows Los Angeles County to access the TOP tool, train its Children's Social Workers and Probation Officers on its use, and produce individual and aggregate reports to departmental management.

The Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation intend to conduct a nine-month pilot on the use of the TOP tool. Thirty Children's Social Workers; ten Supervising Children's Social Workers; one Deputy Probation Officer and one Supervising Deputy Probation officer will participate in the pilot involving 150 DCFS- and five Probation-supervised youth placed outside their birth homes. While the pilot will involve West Los Angeles and Torrance offices, youth involved in this pilot may be placed in any part of the County and, as a result, service providers countywide will be asked to participate in the pilot, too. The TOP assessment will be administered at the beginning of the pilot and at least every three months thereafter, for a minimum of three administrations of the TOP tool per case throughout the nine months.

CDSS is funding access to the TOP tool for the duration of the nine-month pilot and, if successful, will continue to fund county-wide implementation for two years following completion of the pilot. However, should the pilot conclude that use of the

TOP tool poses significant detriment to involved children/youth or to current case management, DCFS and Probation will provide sufficient notice to CDSS and to Kids Insight about its intent to terminate the pilot.

Participation in the TOP pilot by DCFS and Probation requires a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the County and CDSS, approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. There are no direct costs associated with the required MOU, which limits the liability of CDSS and Kids Insight in the event that there are costs associated with a data breach, unauthorized access to confidential information or unauthorized disclosures of protected information by County staff. Supporting successful implementation of the CCR goals is in the best interest of Los Angeles County's abused and neglected children.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors delegates authority to the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services and the Acting Chief Probation Officer:

1. To execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the California Department of Social Services, enabling Los Angeles County to conduct a nine-month pilot to assess children/youth in care using the TOP tool. The MoU will allow the County access to the TOP tool and participation in the services described in the Memorandum of Understanding for the entire term of the pilot, at no cost to the County; and
2. Contingent upon successful pilot results, to fully implement use of the TOP tool county-wide for two years thereafter, at no cost to the County.